

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims replaces all prior versions of claims in the application.

1-13. (Cancelled).

14. (Currently Amended) An overhead traveling carriage system comprising:

an overhead traveling carriage which runs along a running rail and conveys an article,
a stocker which delivers and receives said article to and from said overhead traveling carriage, and

a plurality of processing devices which receive said article,
wherein said stocker includes an elevating space in which a platform is raised or lowered,
wherein said stocker includes a storage space in which a plurality of shelves are provided in a vertical direction to store said article,

wherein said elevating space is disposed nearer to a running path of said overhead traveling carriage than is said storage space, as viewed from above,

wherein said overhead traveling carriage and said running rail are disposed above said stocker, [[and]]

wherein said elevating space and said storage space are of an equal height, and

wherein said elevating space is provided immediately below said running rail.

15. (Previously Presented) An overhead traveling carriage system according to Claim 14, wherein said stocker is disposed adjacent to one of said plurality of processing devices which requires a relatively short time for processing.

16. (Previously Presented) An overhead traveling carriage system according to Claim 14, wherein said stocker is disposed in a gap between two of said plurality of processing devices.

17. (Cancelled)

18. (Previously Presented) An overhead traveling carriage system according to Claim 14, further comprising an opening formed at a top of said elevating space to transfer an article directly between the overhead traveling carriage and the platform.

19. (Previously Presented) An overhead traveling carriage system according to Claim 14, wherein a longitudinal direction of said stocker is orthogonal to the running direction of the overhead traveling carriage.

20. (Previously Presented) An overhead traveling carriage system according to Claim 18, wherein said stocker is disposed in a gap between two of said processing devices.

21. (Previously Presented) An overhead traveling carriage system according to Claim 18, further comprising:

a transfer device on said platform to transfer said article to and from the storage space,

wherein said transfer device is provided with an engaging member that engages with a bottom surface of said article in order to position the article.

22. (Previously Presented) An overhead traveling carriage system according to Claim 21, further comprising:

guide members provided at laterally opposite sides of said platform to guide corresponding sides of said article.

23. (Previously Presented) An overhead traveling carriage system according to Claim 22, further comprising:

rollers provided in a lower part of each of said guide members to support a load of said article, and

follower rollers provided on each of said shelves in said storage space.

24. (Previously Presented) An overhead traveling carriage system according to Claim 23, wherein said transfer device is provided in a central portion between said guide members on said platform.

25. (Previously Presented) An overhead traveling carriage system according to Claim 24, wherein said transfer device further comprises:

a fixed guide fixed to the platform,

a moving guide that moves forward and rearward relative to the fixed guide,
wherein said engaging member moves forward and rearward relative to said moving guide.

26. (Previously Presented) An overhead traveling carriage system according to Claim 25,

wherein said transfer device is moved forward and rearward relative to said fixed guide by a motor to drive an endless first transmission member, said first transmission member being attached to said moving guide, and

wherein said engaging member is moved forward and rearward relative to the moving guide by a second transmission member having one end fixed to the platform, an intermediate portion guided by a guide wheel provided at a tip of the moving guide, and the other end fixed to said engaging member, and

further comprising a third transmission member having one end fixed to the platform, an intermediate portion guided by a guide wheel provided at a proximal end of the moving guide, and the other end fixed to said engaging member.

27. (New) An overhead traveling carriage system comprising:

an overhead traveling carriage which runs along a running rail and conveys an article,
a stocker which delivers and receives said article to and from said overhead traveling carriage, and
a plurality of processing devices which receive said article,

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wherein said stocker includes an elevating space in which a platform is raised or lowered,

wherein said stocker includes a storage space in which a plurality of shelves are provided in a vertical direction to store said article,

wherein said elevating space is disposed nearer to a running path of said overhead traveling carriage than is said storage space, as viewed from above,

wherein said overhead traveling carriage and said running rail are disposed above said stocker,

wherein said elevating space and said storage space are of an equal height,

wherein said stocker includes a station to deliver and receive said article to and from said overhead traveling carriage, and a transfer device arranged on said platform in order to transfer said article forward and rearward.